

*Encounter*  
the  
**FATHER'S  
HEART**



# Encounter the Father's Heart

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Life Group Resource

## Introduction: Encountering the Father's Heart

Our understanding of a father profoundly shapes our identity, our faith, and the way we relate to others. Throughout Scripture, God reveals Himself as the perfect Father—one who loves, guides, protects, provides, disciplines, validates, and models relationships for His children.

Encountering God as Father is transformative. For many, earthly fathers leave a mix of impressions—some affirming, some absent, some wounding. Yet God calls us to see Him as the ultimate source of fatherly love, whose character fulfills every role we need. Through His love, we discover who we truly are, how to relate to Him, and how to live out His love in the world.

Jesus consistently modeled God's fatherly heart in His life and ministry. He demonstrated compassion, guidance, discipline, and affirmation, showing us what it means to be fully known, fully loved, and fully empowered as a child of God. Encountering the Father transforms our identity and equips us to extend His love to others.


## What to Expect in This Study


**Over the next 8 weeks, Life Groups will explore the love of God the Father through Scripture, discussion, and prayer. Participants will:**

- Discover how earthly fathers shape our identity and faith, for better or worse.
- Encounter God as the perfect Father who fully loves and affirms us.
- Understand each fatherly role God embodies and how it impacts our lives.
- Learn to live out God's love in relationships and community.

## Week 1: The Father Who Gives Identity


 Scripture: Matthew 3:13–17


 Key Idea: Identity is received, not achieved.

 Background: Jesus' baptism provides a profound example of the significance of God the Father as our Identity Giver. Before His ministry began, God spoke over Jesus, affirming Him as "My Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." This reveals that our true identity is not earned through achievements, performance, or the approval of others, but received directly from the Father. When we hear God's voice declaring who we are, it sets the foundation for confidence, purpose, and belonging. A father's words, whether human or divine, carry authority and power—they shape how we view ourselves and influence the paths we take in life. Just as Jesus received His identity before His ministry, we are invited to receive God's affirmation before stepping into our calling.

### Discussion Questions:

1. What was your experience of identity from your earthly father (or father figure)?
2. What words were spoken—or not spoken—and how did that shape how you see yourself today?
3. Why is receiving our identity from God foundational before pursuing achievements?
4. How do God's words of affirmation shape our confidence and purpose?
5. Where in your life do you struggle with false identities (e.g. striving, insecurity, performance) instead of finding your identity in Christ?

 Prayer Prompt: Break into pairs or groups of 3. Each person takes a turn sitting quietly while others pray and speak biblical identity over them (e.g., "You are loved," "You are chosen," "You are God's child.")

 Extra Reading: Francis Chan 'Beloved' Introduction

## Week 2: The Father Who Loves Unconditionally

📖 Scripture: Luke 15:11–32

💡 Key Idea: Love is the foundation, not the reward.

📖 Background: The story of the prodigal son illustrates the father's role as the source of love. Even before the son returned, the father ran toward him, demonstrating that love is not conditional on behavior or achievement. God's love operates in the same way: it is the foundation of our identity and life, not something we earn through performance or obedience. Experiencing the Father's unconditional love gives security, heals fear of rejection, and reshapes our relationships with others. When love is foundational, we are free to live authentically rather than constantly striving to prove our worth. Scripture consistently portrays God's love as initiating and restoring, showing that our Father's heart is always ready to embrace.


### 💬 Discussion Questions:

1. How does the prodigal son's story reveal God's unconditional love?
2. Do you relate to the younger son or the older son?
3. How did your earthly father express love? Was it present, absent, conditional, or consistent—and how has that impacted how you receive love today?
4. Where have you tried to earn love or approval?


🙏 Prayer Prompt: Visualize God running to meet you with open arms. Take turns praying this over each other: "You are deeply loved by the Father—not because of what you do, but because of who you are in Christ."

📖 Extra Reading: Francis Chan 'Beloved' Chapter 1 - Insecurity

## Week 3: The Father Who Protects


 Scripture: Psalm 91


 Key Idea: We are protected by the Father.

 Background: Psalm 91 reminds us that God is a refuge, a fortress, and a shield for those who trust Him. When the Father's protective role is present, fear and anxiety are replaced with confidence and peace. Just as a father shields his children from harm, God covers us in our spiritual journey, providing rest, safety, and reassurance. Experiencing this protection allows us to grow, take risks, and engage fully in life without being driven by fear or self-preservation. Trusting God's protection nurtures courage, freedom, and a deeper sense of belonging in His presence.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Did you experience your earthly father as someone who made you feel safe?
2. How has that shaped your sense of security or anxiety?
3. In what areas do you tend to rely on yourself rather than God's covering?
4. How does knowing God is our protector affect your fears or worries?

 Prayer Prompt: Place your fears into God's hands and visualize His protective presence. Pray: "Father, I surrender my fears to You. I trust in Your protection and peace over my life. Amen."

 Extra Reading: Francis Chan 'Beloved' Chapter 2 - Revelation

## Week 4: The Father Who Provides

📖 Scripture: Luke 11:5–13

💡 Key Idea: Trust grows where provision is met.

📖 Background: God as Provider reveals that the Father’s role includes meeting the needs of His children and teaching us to trust Him fully. In Luke 11, Jesus encourages us to ask, seek, and knock, emphasizing that God desires to give good gifts. Provision is not only about material needs but encompasses emotional, spiritual, and relational support. When the Father faithfully provides, trust is cultivated, and we can release control, fear, and scarcity mindsets. Recognizing God as our Provider reshapes how we approach challenges, decision-making, and reliance on ourselves, allowing us to live with confidence and gratitude rather than worry or striving.

### 💬 Discussion Questions:

1. How did your earthly father model provision—emotionally, physically, or spiritually?
2. How has that shaped your trust (or lack of trust) in God as Provider?
3. How does a scarcity mindset affect your faith and decisions?
4. How can gratitude shift your perspective toward trust?

🙏 Prayer Prompt: Identify one area of worry and verbally surrender it to God. Pray: “Father, I release my need to control and trust You as my Provider in every area of my life. Amen.”

📖 Extra Reading: Francis Chan ‘Beloved’ Chapter 3 - Identity

## Week 5: The Father Who Guides

📖 Scripture: Proverbs 3:1–8

💡 Key Idea: We can seek the Father for guidance.

📖 Background: The Father is our Guide for wisdom, direction, and boundaries that lead to life and flourishing. Proverbs 3 emphasizes trusting God’s understanding rather than leaning on our own. A father who guides helps his children avoid pitfalls and make wise choices; similarly, God’s guidance equips us to navigate life with clarity and peace. Following His voice requires learning to listen, discern, obey, and rely on His counsel. When the Father’s guidance is received, confusion diminishes, poor decisions are avoided, and the soul experiences the security and rest that comes from walking in God’s truth.

### 💬 Discussion Questions:

1. Did your earthly father offer guidance and direction in your life? How has that influenced your decision-making today?
2. How have you experienced God’s guidance in your life?
3. Where do you need clearer direction or wisdom?
4. How can obeying God’s guidance bring peace and life?

🙏 Prayer Prompt: Practice listening prayer together: Sit in silence for 2-3 minutes. Ask God: “What do You want to say to me about \_\_\_\_\_?”. (Identify a situation where you need clarity). Share with one another what you received. Pray: “Father, teach me to hear Your voice and follow Your guidance faithfully. Amen.”

📖 Extra Reading: Francis Chan ‘Beloved’ Chapter 4 - Life

## Week 6: The Father Who Disciplines

📖 Scripture: Hebrews 12:5–11

💡 Key Idea: Discipline is a form of love.

📖 Background: The Father’s role as Discipliner demonstrates that loving correction is essential for growth. Hebrews 12 compares God’s discipline to that of an earthly father: it is meant to produce righteousness, perseverance, and maturity, not shame or fear. When discipline is misunderstood, it can appear harsh or absent, resulting in rebellion or lack of boundaries. True discipline teaches us to navigate life responsibly, respond to correction, and grow in character. Experiencing the Father’s loving discipline helps us embrace correction, understand His care, and align our lives with His purposes.

### 💬 Discussion Questions:

1. How did your earthly father handle discipline? Was it harsh, absent, or healthy—and how has that shaped how you respond to correction today?
2. What areas of life require God’s loving correction?
3. How can you embrace God’s discipline without condemnation or fear?


🙏 Prayer Prompt: Reflect on a past correction from God and thank Him for the growth it produced. Pray: “Father, help me see Your discipline as love and trust Your correction for my growth. Amen.”

📖 Extra Reading: Francis Chan ‘Beloved’ Chapter 5 - Overflow

## Week 7: The Father Who Validates


 Scripture: Zephaniah 3:14–17


 Key Idea: We flourish where we are celebrated.

 Background: God as Validator reminds us that we thrive when we are affirmed, celebrated, and spoken over with life-giving words. Zephaniah 3 portrays a Father who rejoices over His children with singing, delight, and affirmation. When we receive God’s delight, we experience security, confidence, and freedom from insecurity and the need for approval from others. This role also challenges us to mirror His affirmation by celebrating others and speaking life over them. The Father’s validation fosters joy, flourishing, and healthy relationships.


### Discussion Questions:


1. Did your earthly father regularly affirm and celebrate you? How has that affected your confidence and need for validation today?
2. How does knowing God delights in you affect your self-perception?
3. Where do you struggle with seeking validation from others?
4. How can you speak life and encouragement to yourself and others?


 Prayer Prompt: Go around the group and have each person speak one word of encouragement or affirmation to the person next to them. Pray: “Father, I receive Your delight and affirmation. Help me flourish in Your love and reflect it to others. Amen.”

 Extra Reading: Francis Chan ‘Beloved’ Chapter 6 - Endurance

## Week 8: The Father's Mantle


 Scripture: 2 Kings 2:9–15

 Key Idea: What we receive from the Father is what we reproduce in our relationships.

 Background: God's love is a model for relationships, showing that the way we relate to others is often shaped by what we have received from our fathers or spiritual mentors. Elijah's mentorship of Elisha demonstrates how healthy fathering passes on wisdom, courage, and spiritual inheritance. God reshapes our relational patterns, helping us love well, navigate conflict, and build authentic connections. Experiencing His fatherly love enables us to break cycles of dysfunction, release fear of vulnerability, and reproduce love, affirmation, and guidance in the lives of others.

### Discussion Questions:

1. How did your earthly father model relationships (communication, conflict, love)?
2. How has that shaped how you relate to others today?
3. What patterns do you need God to reshape in your relationships?
4. How can receiving God's love equip you to love others well?

 Prayer Prompt: Identify a relational challenge or a pattern you'd like to change in your life. Pray for one another, asking God to bring healing and to replace it with His way of relating. Speak this over each other: "You are loved, and you are being made new in how you love others."

## The Father's Blessing

My child,

I see you, and I know you completely. Nothing in your story is hidden from Me, and nothing about you causes Me to turn away.

You are Mine.

I speak over you what is true: You are loved—deeply, unconditionally, and forever. You are chosen—not by accident, but with purpose. You are My son, My daughter, and I delight in you.

Where your heart has been wounded, I bring healing. Where you have believed lies about yourself, I speak truth. Where you have felt alone, I remind you: I am with you.

I am your refuge and your covering. I am your provider—you will not lack what you truly need. I am your guide—I will lead you in the way you should go. I am your Father—I will never leave you or forsake you.

Do not be afraid to come close to Me. You do not need to strive for My approval—you already have My heart. Rest in My presence, and let My love make you whole.

And as you receive My love, I will shape you—so that you may love others as I have loved you, with grace, truth, and compassion.

Go in My peace. Walk in My strength. Live as one who is fully known and fully loved.

I am with you always.

—Your Father

## Additional Resources

### 1. Podcasts

- **Pastor Chuck's Daily Podcast: *40 Days of Father's Blessings***  
A daily journey of hearing and receiving the Father's blessings over your life, rooted in identity, healing, and love.

### 2. Videos

- Father's Love Letter  
<https://youtu.be/ZsBhvSMQUk4?si=nclY7TD7TbvHCcS2>  
A powerful scriptural portrayal of God's personal love for you as Father.

### 3. Worship Songs

- Good Good Father — Chris Tomlin  
<https://youtu.be/-ak0OoFBw3c?si=S05Y5XeHRzB8zUQZ>
- Run to the Father — Cody Carnes  
<https://youtu.be/QyCLC67GC9U?si=zSRJk9kjkv9AXdd>
- I Have a Father — Chandler Moore  
<https://youtu.be/ayUjaEPYnoE?si=aRasLehpYOgrqBc7>
- The Father's House — Cory Asbury  
<https://youtu.be/KOCznQdbDQE?si=KHqAL25fk5wL5rsi>
- Our Father — Don Moen  
<https://youtu.be/ajMqhFz3FIk?si=M2zStJN9lfc1zscx>
- Dear God — Cory Asbury  
<https://youtu.be/15CGKy3R4Es?si=KxctDEKQJdDro1VN>
- Abba — Jonathan David Hessler  
[https://youtu.be/-pZas1xqd0k?si=d5\\_2\\_cMi1l2LPYIN](https://youtu.be/-pZas1xqd0k?si=d5_2_cMi1l2LPYIN)
- Father — Kimberly & Alberto Rivera  
<https://youtu.be/qcNisYhNjh8?si=QYutRU4hN3sPgJeW>

### 4. Books

- Beloved — Francis Chan
- The Father Heart of God — Floyd McClung
- Seeing God as a Perfect Father — Louie Giglio
- The Love of God: An Intimate Look at the Father-Heart of God — Oswald Chambers
- Experiencing the Father's Embrace — Jack Frost
- Healing the Orphan Spirit — Leif Hetland